

A^x

FUNERAL ELEGIE,

In Memory of the Rare,
Famous, and Admired Poet,

Mr. BENIAMIN IONSON
deceased.

Who dyed the sixteenth day of *August*
last, 1637, and lyeth inter'd in the Cathedrall
Church of Saint Peter at Westminster.



London Printed by E. P. for Henry Goffson, and are to
be sold at his Shop on London-Bridge.

1637.

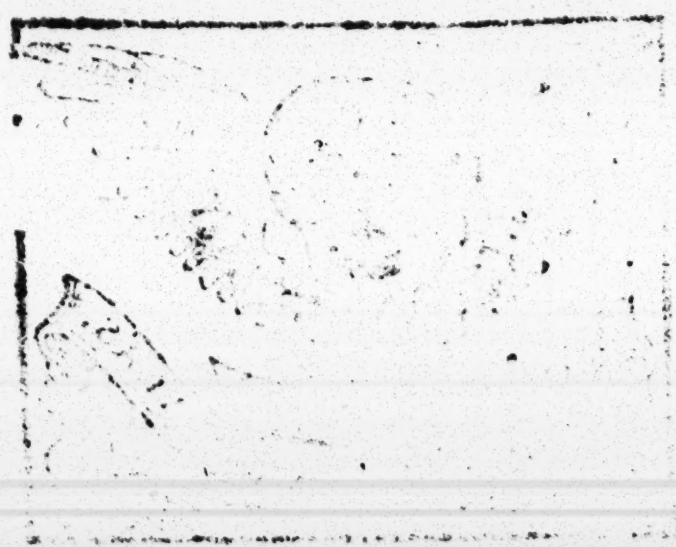
THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

1625-1649

Who dyed the sixteenth day of March
last 1649 - and layeth inter'd in the Church
Church of St. Andrew's Westminster.



Printed by J. Sturges, at the London-bridge.

TO
THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE,
VVORSHIPFULL AND
Others, that are understanding
Readers and Impartiall
Censurers.

Right Honour'd, Worshipfull and knowing men,
I doe not here confine my Dedication,
To any one man, but my toyling pen
Writes to great Brittain, and the Irish Nation,
Know that the subject of My verse is Ben,
And what he was, his workes doe make relation.
Alive his lines abroad by Fame were spread,
For which he is belov'd now he is dead.
Dead, no, he lives, he will, and shall survive,
For Death hath taken but his shell or Rbyn'de,
His better parts are still with us alive,
His Pith or Kernell he hath left behinde,

As

The Epistle Dedicatory.

As Ovid saith, Sword, fire, cannot deprive,
Age, Death or Time, can put him out of mind,
He was belov'd, and for his love I crave,
His Elegie may your acceptance have
You that are men of worth, I speake to you,
Not to the partial and prejudicate:
Nor to the ribble rabble sencelesse crue,
The Hydra monster inconsiderate,
Who scarce know P from G, or blacke from blew,
In either doe respect, the ir love or hate,
For him deccas'd, and for your loves I pend it,
And to your good protections I commend it.

To

To my Friend *J O H N T A Y L O R*, the
Author of this following *Elegie*.

I *ohn*, though (in verse) I doe but seldome write,
Yet love provokes me that I must requite
Thy honest gratitude thou hast exprest,
Although in *Ben* I had no interest ;
He was to me, nor I of him scarce knowne,
Yet for the love (kind Friend) thou here hast showne,
This Paradox of *I O N S O N* may be read,
Hee is not living, nor he is not dead.

E D V V A R D B R I A N.

O living dead man if man may be so,
Death could but take thy body, thy workes show,
What slender wounds the Fates to vertue give,
When they conspire her death, alas shee'l live
Beyond the reach of Fate, *Ben Ions on's* dead,
Yet lives with him, by whom his workes are read ;
How many would desire thy Fate to have,
If they might live as thou dost in the grave,
I that durst never Poetize before,
Dare write these of thee though I write no more.

W I L L I A M Y E O.

A Funerall Elegie.

Ben is deceas'd, and (by his losse) I feare
A dearth wil follow, good wit wil be dear,
What, is the Muses treasurie exhausted?
Is *Tempe's* well, or *Aganippe* wasted,
Or hath the *Thespian* springs no liquor left,
Is *Helicon* of moisture quite bereft?
Hath *Phæbus* (this hot Summer) drawn all dry,
Is it so low an ebbe in poetry?
That all the wit that is profess'd by men,
(Unfit to beare the Inkhorne after *Ben*)
Are Barren now, now are their muses dumb,
Or what stupidity doth them benumb,
That no one hath the wit, the Art, the Skill,
The opportunity, or the good will
To write his Elegie, who once was such,
That of his worth they cannot write too much?
But sure ther's many wits of high account,
That able are, but have no mind to mount
So high a pitch as his high worth requires,
Whose lofty straines were of immortall fires.
Their good wits may (ill) under-doe his fame,
Their best wits cannot over-do the same.

Adv. Bil.

B

Then

A Funerall Elegie.

Then since the Muses, and *Theſſalian* mountaines
Are barren, and the poore *Pegaſean* fountaines
Are drye, yet noble *Thames* ſo farre excels
Thoſe *Mounts*, and *Founts*, and rare ſuppoſed *Wells*,
That I her Poet, am emboldned here,
To be *Ben Ionſons* artleſſe *Chauntecleere*.
But as the pureſt gold unto the eye,
Shines brighteſt, when coarſe metall ſtandeth nigh,
So he (by me that am his foyle or ſhade)
Is more illuſtrated and brighter made.
Minervæ's ſtatue did moſt faire appeare,
When fowle *Meduſæ*'s Image did ſtand neere.
He was our *Homer*, *Maro*, and our *Näſo*,
Our *Perſius*, *Lucan*, *Petrarch*, and our *Taſſo*.
He was to us for ſtate or recreation,
As thoſe, or any Poet to his nation.
His playes were labours, of *Herculean* perill,
Which every wit applauded (but the Sterill)
His workes were playes to pleaſe a learned care,
And intricate to underſtand and Beare:
His *Maſques* expreſt his Iudgement was not weake,
In making *Hills*, rocks, ſtones and rivers ſpeake,

And

A Funerall Elegie.

And like old *Orpheus*, risen from his trance,
He oftentimes made Trees and Beasts to dance.
His workes were Art, his art was Sence and braine,
His braine was his revenue, and his gaine
Was as a Poets should be, words and wind,
Some good, some bad, as Censure was inclin'd.
Many have read him, prais'd him and disprais'd him,
And (in their humours) cast him downe or rais'd him,
When some that in their Iudgements were too hot,
Although they read him, understood him not,
And sure twas more than he was bound to doe,
To find them wit and understanding too,
Yet was he not selfe-will'd, opinionate,
Nor did he wisemens censures under-rate,
But alwayes with discretion would submit
To better Iudgements, but when *Monsieur Wit*,
(Shallow in Braine, more shallow in conceit)
Arts Zany, and a ~~Poet~~ counterfeit,
When such as those did scrow their lawes awry,
And mangle his inventions Scurvily,
His scorne and flight contempt, was all their shares,
Disdaining still to let his wit to theirs,

A Funerall Elegie.

Esteeming Sottish ignorance and pride
Not worth his anger, he would such deride
Indeed his writings were so farre exceeding,
That they were not for every common reading;
Yet he wrote *English*, but 'twas farre refined,
Beyond the apprehension of each Hind;
He could not be (by ignorance) discern'd
For who so read *Ben Iohnson*, must be learn'd
His *Cynthia's Revels*, and his *Poetaster*,
(*Pieces of Art*) declares him his Arts-Master
His *Romane Catilines* conspiracie
Describes much Learning, Wit, and Industry,
Romes great *Sejanus* shews the pompe and Port
Of *Rome*, the *Senate*, and *Tiberius* Court
His *Fox*, his *Atchynist*, his *Silent-Widow*,
Are things uncapable to wit that's common:
His plaies of mens strange humours out, and in,
Approved good applaudit did win;
His *Beggars bush* was written so acute,
It angered envy, and strook *Malice* mute
These (in despite of mischievous detraction)
Were his, and bravely were explain'd in action.

By.

A Funerall Elegie.

By such experienc'd practis'd knowing men,
Whose parallels will never act agen.
(For action is the body of good wit,
And good invention is the Soule of it.
His play of *Bartbol*, *Faire* gave much delight
To all, but such as understood not right,
His *Loadstone* or *Magnetique Lady* fail'd him,
For which detraction round about assayl'd him,
Forgetting all he had wrote well before,
Spreading abroad his errors much the more.
Had each one in his owne particular
Knowne themselves men, and to be apt to erre;
They in their wits possession, or reversion,
Had never cast on him a bad Asperion.
But such mens muses have the *Laska*, I think,
And must be casting *Gall*, or squirting *Inke*,
Till *Woodcocks* have no *Bills*, nor *Gudgeons* gills,
These hot *Pendragonists* will dart their quills
As sharpe as *Bristles*, shot from *Porcupines*,
They shoote their venemous invective lines,
These lines are intricate perhaps to some.
But best of Iudgement know from whence they come.

A Funerall Elegie.

His Epigrams were witty, quick and quaint,
Which *Vice* or *Vertue* did in Colours paint,
Wherein the bad were nip'd, the good were prais'd;
The Gull describ'd, the foole and wise imblaz'd.
A lying rumour up and downe doth run,
Reporting that he was a *Bricklayers Sonne*,
Which if 'twere true were no disgrace or shame,
For famous *Virgil* in a ditch was borne,
And many men of meane obscure degree,
Have risen to the height of *Soveraignty*.
But leaving those to prove report a lyer,
A reverend Preacher was *Ben Jonsons* Sire,
Who finding his innatèd inclination
To learned studies, gave him education,
Being well initiated with his father,
That he the rules of grammar gan to gather,
He (in paternall love) most carefully,
Sent him up to the university,
Where nature mixt with art so fluent wrought
That he learn'd faster than his tutor taught,
And by his owne industrie he did gaine
More then his study ever could attaine,

For

A Funerall Elegie.

For why, 'tis nature onely makes a Poet,
And hee's a natural that wil not know it.
His Father left this mortall pilgrimage,
And dy'd when *Ben* was 17 yeeres of age,
And then twas noted, though his yeeres were greene,
His wit was grave, like one of twice seventeene.
His ingenuity was solid, Steady,
Not rash, or flash, *Dogmaticall* or heady.
Thus in his *Prime* time, when his wit was prime,
His mother chanc'd to match the second time,
She chang'd her copy with more haste than speed,
And married with a *Bricklayer* indeed.
Then did his Father in law, (as most men) deem
Of *Learning* in a beggerly esteeme,
That Arts, and Sciences were poore and bare,
That *Greeke* and *Latine* were despised ware.
He therefore did command his Stepson *Ben*,
From learned studies to come home agen,
Whom he would straight instruct in such a way,
To worke, and live and thrive another day.
Then was he forc'd to leave the *Academ*,
And lay by *Learning* (that unvalued Iem)

Behold

A Funerall Elegie.

Beholde a *Metamorphosis* most strange,
His Books were turn'd to *Bricks*, a suddaine change,
The like was never seene since the creation,
Papers transform'd to *Stones*, (a hard translation)
He from his decent *Scholars* suit *Non suited*,
His habit all with lime and sand polluted,
His writing pen a *Trowel*, and his reading
Was joyning *Brickbatts* close, and mortar spreading.
Thus was he made a *Bricklayer* 'gainst his will,
And was exact in *Geometrick* skill.
VVhereby he well knew *Architectures* grounds,
In *pedestals*, in *Angles*, *Squares*, or *Rounds*,
In *Altitude*, in *Longitude*, in *Latitude*,
In *Pulchritude*, in *Amplitude*, and *Magnitude*,
Yet though he to that trade was hard confin'd,
He had more lofty study in his mind,
Vrania, *Clio*, sweet *Terpsichore*,
Thalia, *Calliope*, *Melpomene*,
Euterpe, and *Erata*, *Polyhymnie*,
The thought of these o're-top'd the highest *Chimney*,
That e're was built of *Lime*, or *Bricke*, or *Stone*,
These were the Sacred *Nine* he built upon;

And

A Funerall Elegie.

And they embrac'd his love, infus'd his braines,
With heavenly raptures and transcendent strayns,
That by their influences, learned Ben,
Layd by the Trowel, Bricks turn'd Books again.
Since to the glory of great Brittaines Ile,
He those forenamed workes did well compile,
In mitable, pithy, so profound,
That through all Christendome he is renown'd.
I may compare him to a candle right,
That wastes himselfe in giving others light,
The world blame not to dote, the cause of it
Is, when she lost him, then she lost her wit.
But though his corps within his grave be pent,
His workes are his immortall Monument,
They shall out weare Tombes made of Brasse or Marble
Till time shall end, his Muse shall sweetly warble.
Alive, he was Arts Master in discourse,
And Dead, his Writings are as much in force.
Ther's some w. ll prate, and talk more than they know,
That the producements of his braine was flow.
Such men of we ghty writings doe misdeeme,
Tis onely number, highly they esteeme.

A Funerall Elegie.

But let those know his lines were so compacted,
Of much maturity of Wit extracted,
So full of lofty and deepe sounding sence,
(Th' extraction of *Apollons* quintessence)
So grave, so learned, so true, so pure,
That though they tearm'd him flow, he still was sure.
He serv'd two Kings, with good integrity,
From whose free grace and liberality,
He had a Royall pension, and true pay,
Which still he spent before the quarter day.
For he was no close fist'd usurer,
No *Mammon's* man, no base extortioner,
He lov'd not gold and silver, and almost,
It lov'd him so, that still no love was lost,
A Cup of Sack he lov'd, (or *Aristippus*)
Which was to him as good as *Aganippus*,
He had a Poets kingdom in his mind,
But in that Kingdom he could never find,
One that could yeeld him any crop,
(For all his land was on *Parnassus* Top.)
And sure that mountaine is so barren now,
That scarce a Bunch of Turneps there doth grow,

Mecenas

A Funerall Elegie.

Mecenas dyed, and few heires behind,
And Poets (like *Camelions*) live by wind,
And noble *Ben*, whilst thou on earth didst live,
Thou my poore muse encouragement didst give,
For which in humble duty to expresse,
The manifesting of my thankfulness,
In love to thee and to thy memory,
I consecrate this poore pen'd Elegie,
If ought be well writ here, 'tis not my muse,
But tis thy *Genius*, that did me infuse,
VVhereby blind ignorance may know and see,
He cannot want a Muse that writes of thee,
~~Thou hadst here many many years (said of many)~~
Belov'd, and well approv'd, in good mens praise,
And at thy death, thy *Faith* such hold did lay,
Vpon thy Saviour which shall nere decay.
Thy life was laudable, thy death was fair,
Thy dust to dust, with honour did repaire,
To *Westminsters Cathedrall*, where it lyes,
Till (wakened by the dreadfull Trump) it rise,
And repossesse thy blest immortal spirit,
VVhere both (united) glory may inherit.

A Funerall Elegie.

Till then shall thy Effigies (carv'd in stone)
Stand with learn'd Camden, and with Casaubon,
Where Chaucer (Englands Homer) is interr'd,
Where Spenser (our Arch-Poet) is prefer'd,
And where the farre fam'd Draytons bones doe rest,
There thy memorall hath a place posselt.

Postscript.

Some few yeeres since I made a foolish vow,
That whilst *Ben Ionsen* I v'd I would not row.
Which Idle oath, I slothfully did keepe,
But now old *Ben* is in a lasting sleepe,
My vow is quit, and if I live once more,
Ile dash and dabble with my scull or Care.
For though it be a worke, Ile boldly say,
That (for the most part) 'tis a game or play,
And whosoever playes, is sure to win
More certaine, than *Gleek*, *Maw*, or *Inne and Inne*,
More gainfull sweat, than can be won at *Tennice*,
Or by a painted Courtezan of *Venice*.
'Twill keepe me pot-free, or I surely think,
I more shall mind my meat, and lesse my drinke:
Thus when the weather's faire, I (now and then)
Am well dispos'd to fall to work agen.

JOHN TAYLOR.

2
Ome few years since I wrote a little
which I did keep
But now old age is in a lasting sleep
My now is past and my live is gone
The daff and dapple with my soul are gone
For though it be a work, he boldly say
I have for the most part, as a game or play
And who ever plays, is sure to win
More certain, than Greek, Mass, or Law and Lane
More gainfull sweet, than can be won at Tennis
Or by a painted Countess of Newice
I will keep me for free, or I surely think
I more shall mind my meat, and let my drinke
Thus when the weather's fine, I (now and then)
Am well disposed to fall to work again.

JOHN TAYLOR.